DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 179 067 EC 122 177

AUTHOR Anderson, Stephen C.; And Others
TITLE [Innovative Services: The Use of Parent Aides in Child Protective Services]. Module 5. Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers.
INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin. School of Social Work.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 54p.; For related information, see EC 122 172-179 ; Best copy available
AVAILABLE FROM Resource Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2609 University, SWB 314, Austin, TX 78712 ($25.00 for printed materials only, $100.00 for entire package that includes printed and audio visual materials)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Abuse; Family Counseling; Family Problems; *Neglected Children; *Occupational Information; *Paraprofessional Personnel; Parent Education; Parent Participation; *Parent Workshops; *Personnel Evaluation; Volunteers

ABSTRACT

Module 5 of a seven module package for child protective service workers outlines procedures for conscientious recruitment and screening of volunteers for a parent aide program serving abused and neglected children and their families. Four activities are geared to laying out a plan for recruiting volunteers, writing a parent aide job description, and developing a plan for screening applicants. Included are directions for using the media package and questions for discussion. (SBH)

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Module 5

Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers

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Acknowledgements

We wish to convey our deeply-felt appreciation to all of the employees of the Texas Department of Human Resources who served on the Volunteer Curriculum Task Force in an advisory capacity and those who reviewed and critiqued these curriculum materials.

The willingness of the staff of the Travis County Lay Therapy Program, Family Focus in Belton, Texas, and Family Outreach of Richardson-Plano, Inc. to share their time and energy greatly enriched these training materials. We extend our gratitude to these innovative programs and to their staffs.

SCA
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IP

Austin, 1979

Grant Information:

This project was supported through funds made available under Title XX regulations for grants to educational institutions from the Texas Department of Human Resources.

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Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers

"They recruited me. They wooed me and said
it wouldn't take too much time.
I signed up.
Now I spend 20 hours a week with a family.
They call me all the time. They have emergencies at night.
My house is dirty.
My husband is angry.
. . . and last night I got so uptight
I almost hit my own child!"

Overview

A program's philosophy and goals are reinforced by conscientious recruitment and screening. Volunteers who are selectively recruited aid the program by:

- accepting program goals and working toward them,
- fitting in better with your organization, and
- serving for longer periods of time.

Honest and straightforward recruitment practices avoid misleading potential volunteers into taking assignments they cannot handle or do not want.

- What are the most effective and efficient recruiting methods?
- How can you ensure a smooth transition from recruiting to screening and training? (how not to lose volunteers)
- How do other programs screen their applicants?

Outcomes

At the completion of this module you will have:

1. Outlined a plan for recruiting volunteers
2. Written a parent aide job description
3. Developed a plan for screening applicants

Activities

1. Pitfalls
2. The Voice of Experience
3. After Education Comes Creation
4. Prevention of Woes

Pitfalls

"To mix the cake batter," I told my nine year old son, "gently lower the mixer blades into the batter and then turn on the electric mixer."

"Is that all there is to it?" he asked.

"Yes," I nodded and then watched horrified as he pulled the still whirling blades out of the batter, spraying the kitchen with chocolate.

"I thought you said using a mixer was easy."

"It is," I replied, "when you know how."

A Mother's Anecdote

Discussion

Like using a mixer, recruitment and screening of volunteers need not be difficult if we know what pitfalls to avoid. Of course we can learn from our own experience, but as the old saying goes, "The trouble with experience as a teacher is that the test comes first and the lesson afterward."

This activity will introduce some of the pitfalls you may encounter and help you plan ways to avoid them.

Directions

Working as a group, read over the four situations on the following pages, entitled Possible Pitfalls, and answer the discussion questions after each one.

Possible Pitfalls

1. You have just finished a city-wide recruitment campaign and sixty-seven people have called or written in for further information. You sent off information packets and application forms, and, as of today, forty applications have been received. The next step in the screening process is a lengthy interview with each applicant. As project coordinator, you typically conduct these interviews. However, your duties as coordinator will not allow you to spend more than 15 hours a week (at the most!) interviewing. Your other two staff members are engaged in supervising volunteers. You know that if you wait too long to get back to these people you may lose them.

   Your Problem: You have too many applicants and too little time.

   Answer these questions:
   - List three ways you might have prevented this problem.
   - Now that you are "in a jam," list two ways you could act to alleviate this situation.

2. It is your job to interview prospective volunteers. Right now, you are talking with a woman . . . let's call her Mrs. Wilson . . . who is very interested in becoming a parent aide in your program. Her enthusiasm and frankness would be an asset to your program. However, as the interview continues, her enthusiasm turns into evangelistic fervor, and her frankness reveals the depths of her racism. Right now, Mrs. Wilson is smiling at you and asking, "When do I start?"

   Your Problem: What to do with an applicant who would not make a good parent aide.

   Answer these questions:
   - What other volunteer positions (besides parent aide) might you develop for applicants who want to help you but might not make good parent aides?
   - What are some "pre-interview" screening techniques you might employ to screen out unsuitable applicants?
   - What will you say to Mrs. Wilson?

3. Your last recruiting campaign has presented you with an interesting problem. Five out of the sixteen applicants have full time jobs! Four out of those five would probably make outstanding parent aides. They plan to meet with clients evenings and weekends, which is a plus, because fathers are more likely to be home then.

Your Problem: All of your training and supervision sessions are scheduled between the hours of 8-5 on weekdays. You are not set up to handle volunteers who hold jobs during the day.

Answer these questions:

- What factors do you need to consider before deciding whether to accept the applicants with full time jobs?
- If you decide you only want parent aides who are available between the hours of 8-5, how could you recruit most efficiently?

4. After two successful recruiting sessions you now have eighteen volunteers. They are a very effective group. They are also a very homogeneous group — all middle class white women between the ages of 25 and 45.

Your Problem: How to diversify your applicant pool.

Answer these questions:

- What are some possible reasons for wanting a diverse parent aide group?
- How might you recruit to make a diverse group a reality?

The Voice of Experience

"Experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted."

Discussion

To prevent you from getting only experience and not desired results when you recruit and screen applicants, we are going to learn how other parent aide programs recruit qualified applicants. To do this, reading material from four sources is provided. Data sources include recruitment and screening materials used by two established programs (Family Outreach and Alliance). A third source is the recommended plan developed by the Michigan State Department of Social Services Division of Protective Services before they began their program. And the fourth source is a recruitment packet from the Office of Citizen Involvement, Region 06.

For efficiency's sake, each person in your group will read only the materials from one data source. Each person will be a specialist in his/her own reading materials. You will later use what you have read to develop your own recruitment and screening plan.

Directions

Read over the "Descriptions of Data Sources" which appear on the following pages. Decide which person in your group will be responsible for each of the "Data Sources." Then, working individually, familiarize yourself with the materials from the "Data Source" you have chosen. You should look for information in these five categories:

A. Criteria for Volunteers:
(time; personal characteristics; minimum parenting experience; training requirements; age; minimum length of their commitment to program [months])

B. Main Points for Media Copy:
(concepts; benefits of the volunteer program; selling points; who to contact for information)

C. Recruitment Process:
(media contacts [radio, T.V., newspaper]; design, printing, distribution of written materials; will someone speak to groups; target groups; time of year; target number of volunteers)

D. Process for Handling Applications:
- what information will be given to interested people over the phone and who will give it?
- what information will be mailed to people?
- what questions will your application form ask?
- who will read the applications and do preliminary screening?

E. Screening Process:
- who will do screening? (alone or group? one screening interview or more?)
- what questions will lead to the information you need about applicants? (personal qualities, own life experience, commitment, self assurance)
- will you give them role play questions? (i.e., "If you were a parent aide and a parent said to you . . . ")
- how will you determine whether a person has "passed" the screening?
- how will you notify people who were accepted into the program?
- how will you deal with people who were not accepted?

When you locate information in your "Data Source" on these topics, you may wish to jot important points on your "Notesheet" so you have them available for the discussion later. When everyone in your group has finished reading, move on to Activity 3.

NOTESHEET

_____
Name of Data Source

A. Criteria for Volunteers

_____

_____

_____

B. Main Points for Media Copy

_____

_____

_____

C. Recruitment Process

_____

_____

_____

D. Process for Handling Applications

_____

_____

_____

E. Screening Process

_____

_____

_____

Description of Data Sources

I. Alliance

Pay particular attention to the list of criteria for choosing parent aides. The recruitment and screening style that Alliance uses will differ from yours (they pay their aides!), but you should find some of their techniques helpful, e.g., how they ask applicants to role play "typical" situations.

Begins on page 10

II. Michigan

This model was designed after they completed a phone survey of ten parent aide programs across the country and then assessed their own needs. Notice: 1) how they planned recruiting activities for an entire year, 2) their use of a general orientation, 3) indicators of what an interviewer should look for during screening.

Begins on page 15

III. Family Outreach Of Richardson-Plano, Inc. (FORPI)

FORPI has prepared a variety of job descriptions for different volunteer positions. Also, note the interviewing guidelines.

Begins on page 20

IV. Office Of Citizen Involvement, Region 06

The "Recruitment Tips" should prove a great help to you because they are written specifically for DHR staff. The recruitment sources can help you pinpoint the best target audiences for your recruitment presentations.

Begins on page 31

Data Source I
Alliance

Who Makes a Good Aide?

Parent aides will need certain qualities if they are to be effective. Aides must be persons who enjoy meeting people and have good interpersonal skills. People who tend to be shy or reserved generally have difficulty with this role. It is important that the aides be persons who are non-judgemental. The types of families they will encounter will often have value systems much different from their own. Additionally, aides must be able to recognize and accept people who are living in pathological situations. They must be able to maintain enthusiasm for the family's ability to change. For that task they will need to have successfully surmounted crises in their own lives. A sense of humor is essential, especially if the aides are to deal positively with the hostility and resistance which often accompany early intervention by parent aides.

Aides will have some of the qualities mentioned above to a greater or lesser extent. Several qualities, however, are essential and central to the effectiveness of a parent-aide program. Most significantly, aides must be warm and caring persons. There are great variations in the style of that warmth, but the quality must be clearly present. Aides will be most effective if they are able to provide trust and understanding to people who have had little experience with either. Concomitantly, aides must be able to listen to the client in such a way as to understand the person's total message, content and feeling. Without those qualities, the skills needed for effective intervention will be without a firm base of genuine human concern.

Needs Assessment

What Skills Do Aides Need?

Household Management. Aides will need skills in organizing and effectively running a household. They will be called upon to teach budgeting, cooking, shopping and cleaning by active example. Aides will need skills in performing those tasks and the ability to communicate these skills simply.

Model for Effective Parent-Child Interaction. Aides must be able to model effective parent-child relationships without seeming condescending or didactic. They must be able to deal with exceptionally taxing children in a consistent and effective manner.

Crisis Response. Aides will be called upon to respond to family crises. They will need the ability to discern what their response should be in terms of the role they have with the family. They must be able to respond without becoming so emotionally involved as to lose their effectiveness. Additionally, it will be important for aides to make an assessment of the danger involved in a crisis situation so that they will not jeopardize themselves or the family.

Listening. While effective listening is a quality aides should bring to the job, skills must be developed so that they can deal with individuals who are unaccustomed to expressing their feelings and who might have limited verbal abilities. Untangling mixed messages and hearing feelings beyond the words will be essential if the aides are to be effective.

Dealing with Professionals and Non-Professionals. In multi-problem families, normally a number of professionals and perhaps non-professionals will be involved. It will be necessary for aides to be able to work comfortably with others, while not assuming responsibilities the family should take, or allowing other agency representatives to usurp or misuse the aides' role.

Confidentiality. While seemingly simple, the problem of confidentiality for parent aides is complex. Typically, aides will have more information about a family than any other individual involved. With whom do aides share that information? What information must they share? How do they explain the limits of their confidentiality to the families with whom they work? What kind of information need not be shared?

Hostility and Resistance. Aides will be faced with the anger and hostility which often accompany early intervention in abusive families. Aides will need to be able to overcome that initial hostility without being manipulated by it. Aides will need skill in interpreting what the anger and hostility are communicating, without withdrawing or becoming defensive to the point where they are ineffective.

Establishing Priorities. In a multi-problem family, the question is often where to begin. Aides will need to be able to establish priorities with the families with whom they are working so that the job of beginning does not overwhelm both the families and the aides. They will need skill in separating out what they feel is most important and what the families see as their immediate need.

Self-Assertion/Setting Limits. Aides must be able to honestly and effectively assert themselves, both with the family and other helping persons. Setting reasonable limits is extremely important. Aides must not allow themselves to tolerate behavior or conditions on which they would normally set limits. It is often difficult for aides to reconcile showing their concern and saying "no."

Understanding Systems/Community Resources. Aides must have skill in dealing with systems that affect families with whom they work. Some facility with public assistance, Medicaid, hospital and school procedures is a must. Knowledge of available community resources is important if the aides are to teach effective use of services.

Communication Skills. Aides must possess skills in communicating with people. They will need to be sensitive to non-verbal clues such as body language. It will be important for aides to provide feedback to their families, both positive and negative, in a way in which the aides still show they care. Aides will need skill in identifying the hidden agenda, the message below the surface, and responding to that type of interaction. They will need to be able to express their own feelings honestly and directly.

Ability to Work in Pathological Settings. In order to be effective, aides must be able to work in situations which are essentially pathological. They must be able to work with behaviors and styles of living that are different from their own and which are, in fact, destructive to the individuals involved. For example, aides must not feel that everything is futile because the parents they work with are habitual liars.

Child Development. Aides will need to have skill in determining the progressive stages of child development. For example, they must know satisfactory weights for infants, when a child should begin to grasp objects, and other basic developmental indicators so that they might assist those individuals whose primary focus is the development of the children.

Family Dynamics. Aides must have some basic understanding of the principles of family dynamics so that they can understand how the family functions. They will need to be able to assess which relationships are strong, which are weak, where the power in the family lies, and what effect their presence has on the total dynamics of the family. For example, aides often cause a change in the attitude or behavior of one parent in the family when aides develop a close relationship with the other parent in the family. Aides also need to understand the influence race, culture and sexual sterotyping have on family dynamics.

Appendix

I. How Aides are Recruited

Initially, Alliance attempted to utilize a combination of home aides and volunteers as parent aides. While the program was impressed with the quality of the volunteers, we soon found that volunteers were unable to make the time commitments required of parent-aides which entails being in the home from 8 to 40 hours a week, attending team

meetings and responding to crises. It was also difficult to hold volunteers accountable for any hours that were missed, and other team members and Family Court may well have made a decision to leave a child in the home based on the aide's contact. Therefore, after a year's trial period, only paid parent aides were utilized.

College students were not seen as a resource since their involvement with a family would be limited by time, and school vacations would necessarily limit their accessibility to families.

Aides are primarily recruited through the New York State Employment Service. However, some aides have been recruited from Home Aides of Central New York, Inc., some by word of mouth, and some through advertisements in neighborhood newspapers and the local agencies.

Potential parent aides fill out an application. Emphasis is placed on the parent aide applicants' own life experiences, acceptance of people who may have a different life style than their own, the candidates' warmth and flexibility. Since the relationship between parent-aides and a family is necessarily an intimate one, the interviewer must ask many personal questions of the candidates. Their openness in discussing what may be some very difficult areas is one indicator of how successful they will be as parent aides.

Candidates are asked to respond to typical situations in which they might find themselves, such as having to visit a parent who will be hostile to them, working in a dirty home or working with homosexuals. Candidates who indicate they can respond to any situation and do not admit to having troubles with dealing with some areas are necessarily viewed as suspect. The process the candidates go through in deciding how they would work with such a problem will be a good indicator of their potential success.

Since many aides live in the same area as the families they serve and since their own ability to surmount crises in their lives has helped their understanding of others with problems, the interviewer may be faced with an applicant who has an old or active child welfare case or a criminal record. Whether to hire or not, given these conditions, must be an individual decision based on where the candidates are now, what they have done to work out their own problems, and the likelihood that their problems would detract from their ability to work with families.

If the Alliance interviewer believes that the candidates have potential, their references are checked, and if they appear to have the qualities necessary for an aide, they are sent to Home Aides of Central New York, Inc. to be interviewed by the field supervisor. The field supervisor explains that aides must go through a two-week unpaid training program at Home Aides and that the candidates must be willing to work on home-aide cases should there be a break in their parent aide jobs. If the candidates are still interested and the field supervisor believes they have the qualifications to be good parent aides, they are then scheduled to begin the Homemaker/Home Health Aide Training program. A description of the training they will receive, work rules, payment, etc., is then given to the candidates so there will be no confusion about procedures.

Data Source II

Michigan

Volunteer Recruitment

Two of the most important recruitment tools, a good program and a meaningful job, are built into the parent aide program. The job design of the parent aide is one that offers strong motivational facets of challenge and responsibility, and the process of recruitment can be enthusiastically approached knowing that the need is great and the work can be rewarding.

The recruitment of volunteers should be a process of screening and, to insure this, the program coordinator will need to incorporate several general criteria:

1. Choose appropriate audiences with interest and priorities that will coincide with this program. For example, business and professional women probably won't have the available time to serve as parent aides. However, don't limit the appeal to the "traditional volunteer" — the white, middle-class female. Many parent aide programs use and want more aides who represent a range of socio-economic groups.
2. Be honest and specific in the appeal for volunteers. Describe in general the program and the skills the aide needs in order that the potential volunteer can make a thoughtful decision on whether she might fit well into the program.
3. A feel of enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the program on the coordinator's part is a vital part of approaching the potential volunteers. They must sense the opportunity here of "making a difference" to others and to themselves.
4. Determine a recruiting plan for the entire year. Some of the programs surveyed mentioned that the fall, after school has begun, is an active time for recruitment as people begin to make new commitments. However, speaking engagements, human interest stories in the media, pamphlets and other forms of recruitment should continue consistently throughout the year to encompass the potential volunteer who may be free at a later time.

   There are several sources to consider in recruiting volunteers. Speaking engagements to church groups, service clubs, etc., are vital. To facilitate this activity, a Speaker's Bureau should be an immediate goal for the program. Many of the surveyed programs had a Speaker's Bureau and interested parent aides were natural choices as part of the membership.

   The news media offers an opportunity for wide coverage. Feature stories in newspapers and interview or talk shows on television or radio are possibilites.

   The Voluntary Action Center in Kalamazoo is a highly successful organization. They will be of great assistance and they have already pledged themselves to this effort.

   A general orientation, open to the public, is an effective means of both educating the community and recruiting volunteers at the same time.

There are many people willing to give of their time and talents, but they must know that they are needed and in what way. The recruitment of volunteers for the parent aide program is a vital, ongoing part of the program that requires careful planning and consideration.

Screening Volunteers

Public Orientation

As was stated in the preceding section, a general orientation, which is open to the public, serves the dual purpose of educating the community concerning child abuse and neglect plus recruiting volunteers for the program.

The people attending public orientation meetings will be motivated by various reasons, but their presence indicates an interest in the program and this interest should be used as a means of self-screening. The coordinator must be honest in describing the program and be specific in the responsibilities and qualifications that anyone would need to know in order to volunteer. There is, of course, a delicate balance here between scaring all the listeners away and only discouraging those who would not fit the requirements.

Application Form

A sample application form for volunteers wishing to apply for a parent aide position is included in Appendix A.

Personal Interview

Although most of the applicants will have some idea of the commitment involved when they are considering becoming a parent aide, the personal interview is the time to clarify what the applicant's conceptions are of (1) the goals of the program; i.e., to prevent child abuse and neglect through a parent-directed program, and (2) his/her obligations to the program if he/she undertakes training and assignment to a family.

In screening, the coordinator should be watching for:

1. A person whose childhood memories are of being loved and accepted.
2. A person who has enjoyed the parenting role (the neighborhood cookie baker).
3. Indications of flexibility.
4. Indications of tolerance.
5. Indication of the ability to *listen.*
6. Indications that there is enough emotional responsibility and well-being that involvement with a troubled family will not drain the applicant.
7. Indications of maturity, warmth and acceptance.
8. Familiarity with normal childhood development and the pains of parenting.
9. A person who has had some difficulties of her own and has found successful ways of dealing with them.

Continued Observations by the Coordinator

As the parent aide training progresses, there may be persons who, it becomes obvious, are not going to be beneficial to an actual or potential abusing or neglecting parent. These might be ones who: (1) cannot seem to focus on the parent's role instead of the plight of the children; (2) are constant advice-givers; (3) are authoritarian in having always to be directive of others in the training group; and (4) are unable to form a tolerant and loving attitude toward the parent as the dynamics of the problem are discussed.

Individual appointments with these applicants could provide feedback of the feelings the coordinator has picked up from observation.

We would recommend, however, that each applicant who starts training be encouraged to finish with the group for the increased knowledge and skills that will then be available in the general community as a result of attending and interacting in the group.

Self-Screening During and After Training

It is a definite possibility that there will be the occasional volunteer who will conclude, either during or after the training, that she is unable to function well in the role of a parent aide. If, at this point, the coordinator determines that it is a realistic decision and not a temporary case of stage fright that will pass with additional support and time, then she should again urge the volunteer to continue to the end of the sessions for general educational purposes. She should consider, with the trainee, alternative roles that the volunteer might be able to handle in the program; such as, Speaker's Bureau, office help or other possibilities that may occur as the program develops.

Volunteer Information Form

Date: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____

Educational Background: _____

Major Field of Study: _____

Present Occupation: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Marital Status: _____

Spouse's Educational Background: _____

Spouse's Major Field of Study: _____

Spouse's Present Occupation: _____

Names of Children: _____

Ages: _____

List Interests & Hobbies: _____

_____

For CPT Use Only

Interview- Date:

Parent assigned: _____ Date: _____

Agency: _____ Coordinator: _____

Comments: _____

_____

Initial Volunteer Call Sheet

Date: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Marital Status: _____

Age of Children: _____ _____

How heard about: _____

Why interested in program:

Comments:

Interviewer:

Data Source III.

Family Outreach of Richardson/Plano, Inc. (FORPI)

Recruitment And Screening

Family Outreach does most of its recruitment through speaking engagements at clubs and organizations. After the presentation, one-to-one contact is available to interested persons. They have little difficulty in finding applicants. They live and work in an affluent community where many households are fully supported by one salary.

The screening is done by the membership chairperson who looks for someone who could be an effective member of the organization. Not all Family Outreach members provide casework services to families. Some are very active on committees, in maintaining the office, or accepting intake information on the telephone.

Self screening continues throughout the 12-week training period. During this time volunteer applicants are learning casework skills, and may drop out of the program at any time.

If a volunteer is not living up to minimum standards of attendance and cooperation, he/she may be asked to resign by the President and the Membership Committee.

Family Outreach Center Richardson/Plano
509 Arapaho Central Park
Richardson 75080
Telephone: 231-6584
Confidential Information

Volunteer Application

Date: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Marital Status: _____ Name of Spouse: _____

Children's Names: _____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

Employed? _____ Where? _____

Part Time or Full Time? _____ In What Capacity? _____

Spouse Employed? _____ Where? _____

Business Phone: _____

If married, how does your spouse feel about your doing work at Family Outreach?

_____

_____

_____

Religious Affiliation: _____

Education: _____

How did you hear about Family Outreach? _____

_____

Past Volunteer Activities: _____

_____

_____

_____

Present Volunteer Activities: _____

_____

_____

_____

What days and what hours will you be available to work at the cento ? (Note: your training will run for 13-2½ hour sessions. Meeting once a week. After training you must give a minimum of *18 hours a month to the center. Two hours in training, 3 hours in office, 8 hours other.)*

_____

_____

_____

Describe a time when you sought or received help from someone. Please note your feelings about this.

What do you feel are the strengths and weaknesses that you will bring to this program?

If you have ever been a participant in group or individual therapy or counseling, how do you feel this experience will help you to help others?

Write a brief statment on why you have chosen to work in the Family Outreach Program at this particular time in your life.

Please list three (3) personal references:

At least *one* reference must be someone other than a friend or co-worker: (For example, minister, teacher, employer, therapist, etc.)

1) Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

2) Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

3) Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Please number in order of priority the areas of service you prefer at Family Outreach Center.

_____ Telephone (taking referrals — crisis intervention)

_____ Working directly with a family

_____ Procedural assignments (telephoning, mailing, etc.)

_____ Typing

_____ Speakers Bureau

_____ Fund raising

_____ Research

Do you have any questions or concerns about this application form?

Signature _____

Family Outreach Program
Dallas County Child Welfare
Dallas, Texas

*Promise To Maintain Confidential Information**

I promise that I shall hold in confidence all information regarding callers or clients of Family Outreach of Dallas County. I will not violate the confidential relationships between Family Outreach program, its volunteers, clients, Child Welfare staff and callers to this Agency.

I will not remove from the office of Family Outreach any written client records or copies thereof.

I accept full responsibility for maintaining the confidential and private nature of all client records and information. I understand that I am personally responsible and liable for any violation of this agreement.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Witness: _____

Project Manager

*Instrument from Parental Stress Service, Inc., Alameda County, California

Job Description

Family Outreach Center Volunteer

The gift of one's talents, skills and time to voluntary community services is a potent expression of sensitive caring and genuine regard for others, be they friend, neighbor, acquaintance, or stranger. The Volunteer who chooses to serve through Family Outreach gives to the children and families of the community by responding and attending to their needs, problems and desires.

It is not anticipated that the Volunteer will be "all things to all people," but certain qualifications are basic. These are:

1. Ability to establish a personal and professional relationship based on sincere interest and genuine concern.
2. Ability to support and strengthen the self worth of each individual and the ability to recognize the individual's need "to be needed."
3. Patience, warmth, cheerfulness, integrity, dependability, promptness, emotional maturity and stability.
4. Willingness to learn, to accept direction, to make use of constructive criticism, and to complete the training course.
5. *Respect for confidentiality.*
6. Acceptance of regulations of the Nueces County Child Welfare Unit.
7. Ability to recognize that some problems are beyond the comprehension, understanding or solution of the volunteer and these should be discussed with the Casework Manager.
8. Acceptance of responsibility to terminate the agreement to provide services to Family Outreach and/or the client when service is completed, if moving out of the community, or if other commitments do not permit availability.
9. Ability to request a change in assignment if the Volunteer is unhappy. (If Volunteer has been unsuccessful in one assignment, this does not mean that the volunteer cannot be successful in another.)
10. Above All — ability to be a good listener.

The Family Outreach Volunteer is screened by the Casework Manager and participates in the mandatory orientation and on-going training course. At least 75% of the training course must be completed before a case assignment is made. Assignments are made on the basis of the Volunteer's interest, experience, special skills, potential, and availability. The Volunteer is required to give a *minimum* of:

a. 3 hours in office per month (phone duty)
b. 2 hours training per month (when scheduled)
c. 3 hours per month other activities (casework, newsletter, Speaker's Bureau, publicity, etc.

A variety of duties are entailed in the many services that are appropriate for a Family Outreach Center Volunteer. These are:

Family Outreach Center Volunteer

Job Description

Social Services Family Consultant Volunteer

1. Training requirement: Satisfactory completion of Outreach Orientation. Completion of the basic on-going training segments (approximately 30 hours). Continued participation in a monthly training session, especially while on case assignment.
2. Supplement the professional services of the Caseworker through:
   a. Family visitation and counseling
   b. Providing tangible services, such as budgetary planning, child care techniques, and healthy child-rearing methods, etc.
   c. Maintaining the confidential nature of all social and interpersonal services.
3. Identifying a family in crisis.
4. Assisting the family in developing a more stable and healthy environment in which to rear children.
5. Recognition of change in family attitude or structure which indicates improvement, regression, "plateau status" or need for termination of service through referral to an appropriate agency, or "closing the case" using the "open door" policy — expression of interest in hearing from the family from time to time about how "things are going" or to forestall another crisis situation.
6. Recognition of a family's need for services beyond the scope of the Family Outreach Center and preparation of the family to seek these services.
7. Awareness of community resources and their inter-relatedness.
8. Use of supervision for:
   a. problem clarification.
   b. direction in contacts.
   c. establishment of agreed mutual goals (which member of the family wants to achieve and what the agency can do).
   d. implementation of goals within reasonable time limits.
   e. change in treatment plan.
   f. relinquishment of case if developments require skilled professional service.
   g. assistance in terminating service as a Volunteer.
9. Allied services, such as:
   a. consistent case recording according to prescribed procedures.
   b. planning recreational or cultural activities.
   c. tutoring.
   d. transportation.

Family Outreach Center Volunteer

Job Description

Ancillary Services — Community Services Volunteer

1. Training requirement: Satisfactory completion of Outreach Orientation and on-going training. Show satisfactory telephone answering technique in terms of accepting incoming referrals. Show familiarity with community resources.
2. Telephone — take referrals, make appointments for office interviews, supply general information, supportive counseling with objective of scheduling an interview (home or office) or making appropriate referral to another agency or source of help.
3. May participate in some or all of the following activities:
   a. speakers bureau (after completion of special speakers orientation)
   b. public relations
   c. membership committee
   d. special projects done by Outreach
   e. staffing procedures
   f. newsletter writing
   g. research and statistics
   h. general office tasks

Clerical Volunteer

1. Training requirement: none, other than instruction needed to acquaint volunteer with task assigned.
2. This volunteer — having not gone through training to gain telephone intake skills — shall not be put in a position where he or she might have to take a referral.
3. This volunteer may participate in the following activities:
   a. public relations
   b. general office tasks such as typing and filing
   c. compiling statistics
   d. newsletter writing
   e. other tasks that do not require orientation or on-going training to client needs.

Job Description Amendment

1. If a volunteer is gainfully employed or a student but wishes to remain a volunteer in good standing; the minimum hours have been amended as follows:

   *A. 2 hours training per month (when scheduled)
   B. 3 hours per month other related activities

2. If a volunteer wished to do office duty only, these requirements must be met:

   A. 6 hours in office per month (phone duty)
   *B. 2 hours training per month (when scheduled)

*If it is not possible for the volunteer to attend training sessions, his or her situation will be evaluated by the membership chairman and the casework manager to determine if there is some alternative where training requirements can be met.

Interviewing Guidelines

1. How did applicant become aware of FOC? What does applicant know about our agency? Give history of FOC. Explain FORPI as a volunteer organization with officers and committee chairmen which operate FOC through a contract with Dallas County Child Welfare.
2. Explain purpose of FOC is to prevent, and protect children from, child abuse and neglect. Explore what applicant knows about abuse and neglect. Can applicant understand that the parents are not "horrible monsters," that they are usually isolated people with low self-esteem who don't know better ways of parenting or are unable to handle their frustrations without taking them out on children? Check out whether applicant is prejudiced against minorities or "welfare."
3. Go over the required hours and breakdown: 13 hours/month with 3 in office and 2 on-going training required. Explain that there are at least 8 training sessions offered every four months and attendance at four is required for caseworkers; one is required for non-caseworkers. There is a one year commitment required. Volunteer time is reviewed tri-annually with warning letter first if deficient, and enforced leave of absence or resignation, if continues deficient. Explain training program: 2 morning and 1 afternoon orientation sessions, 12 week-one morning a week casework training and 1 afternoon office training session. seventy-five percent attendance record is minimum required on training/orientation.
4. Tell about Speaker's Bureau and its importance to FOC — is applicant interested?

5. Let applicants know that he/she must be insured to transport clients in his/her car and that he/she can be sued by a client, but that Volunteers would be afforded the services of the State Attorney General's Office in defending the case, just as if they were paid employees of the State of Texas DPW.
6. Tell applicant we serve families in the Richardson and Plano school districts. Give some brief description of the range of families we serve. Emphasize that we do not handle severe child abuse cases, Child Welfare does. Go over the need for confidentiality thoroughly.
7. Explain Barbara's role as casework supervisor and intake worker. Let applicant know that Barbara decides which of the intakes we may receive on the phone or from walk-in clients are actually serviced here or referred elsewhere; volunteers don't make that decision. Tell applicant that Barbara will discuss case she would like to assign and the volunteer can say "yes" or "no" to taking it. Be sure applicant understands that casework can be emotionally draining and that regular dictation of the work is required.
8. Check out applicant's background — special training, previous volunteer work. Evaluate with applicant what strengths and weaknesses this person would bring to FOC. What does applicant expect to get from becoming a volunteer here? Assess at close of interview whether FORPI's needs and applicant's needs mesh. Most of all, we need caseworkers, and office workers but we need speakers and Administrative leaders, too.
9. Keep in mind that you are looking for a mature person with own head "together." Listen for genuine interest and concern for children, helping others, what is happening to family life today, etc. Does applicant "listen" to you and appear to be the kind of person clients could come to "trust"? Do not hesitate to turn down volunteer applicants who do not meet our needs or come across as the kind of person we do not want here. Some of these may be suitable for referring to Child Welfare for other volunteer programs within Dept. of Public Welfare.

Dallas DPW Volunteer Consultant — Pat Weiss 742-9500
(Plano) Collin Co. Volunteer Coordinator — Cheryl Williams 1-592-1220

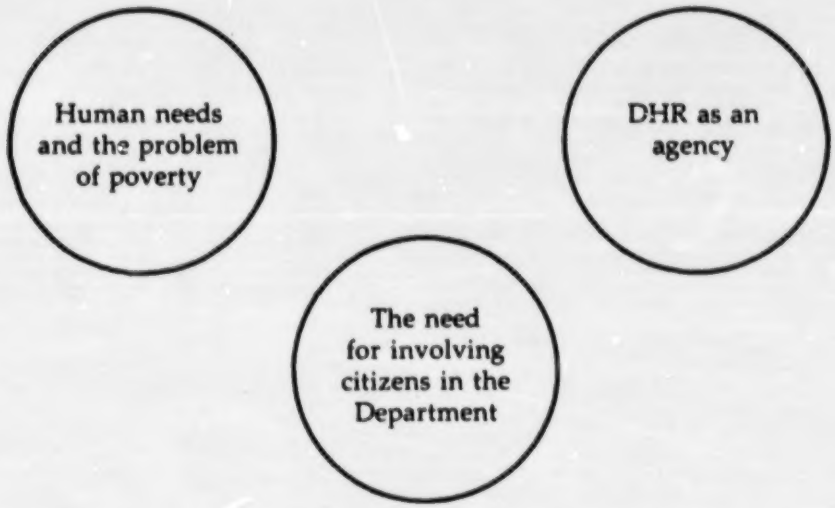
Data Source IV

Office of Citizen Involvement Region 06

Recruitment

Determining what skills you need is important in any recruitment effort, but equally crucial is considering "What are the **needs** and **motives** of the people you are trying to recruit?" *Recruitment is a cinch if you offer the right person a meaningful job which is appropriate for his personal goals and realities.* For example, Home Economic Clubs would very likely have volunteers who would like to set up nutrition programs for AFDC mothers, and Future Teacher groups at a high school are likely recruiting places for tutors for elementary school-age clients. However, recruiting clerical assistants at the Lions Club does not make very good sense. (They may be terrible at typing!)

As a volunteer recruiter, you will be selling a number of concepts:



Recruitment Tips

*Successful recruiting needs to be done on a personal level.

*The recruiter needs to be clear as to the purpose of the program and the particular job he is recruiting for. (See Job Descriptions!)

*The recruiter needs to feel positive and to communicate convictions about the organization, its programs and purposes.

*A "no" should be respected and accepted just as "yes, I'll do it."

*Flexibility and variety of opportunities will increase potential for success in recruitment. (Perhaps the applicant would be a better receptionist than a big buddy.)

*Design recruitment approach based on motivations of the potential volunteer. (Brochures, PSAs, talks, etc.)

1 Do Specific Rather Than General Recruiting Whenever Possible.

Some generalized public information is necessary to acquaint the community at large with your program and to establish both visibility and credibility.

- Choose Appropriate Audiences Whose Interest And Priorities Match Your Needs.

For example, most service clubs have yearly priorities determined by their national organizations. If the priority for Kiwanis is Senior Citizens this year, an appeal for youth workers may not be appropriate. Likewise, it is futile to appeal to a club of business and professional women for day care aides, as they are all at work when you need their help.

- Determine Where The Skills Are That You Need And Actively Seek Them Out.

If you need a brochure done, seek help from an advertising agnecy or club or from a high school or college art department. If you are starting a program for children with learning difficulties, try ex-teachers, psychology students and parents of the children (they have the basic skills needed, plus a real interest in learning more about the problem). If you wait for volunteers to find you instead of actively seeking them out, the results are usually disappointing.

- **Be As Specific And Honest In Your Appeal As Possible.**

What is your need and why? The usual general pleas of "we need your help" are getting more and more ineffective, because so many groups and causes need help. As volunteers become more selective and concerned about the value of involvement, they become more insistent upon knowing what skills you need, when you need them, and why, so that they can make intelligent decisions as to whether they fit your need or not. Be honest about how much time and what type of work the volunteer job will entail. *A glamorous snow-job or the casual "it will hardly take any of your time at all" are danger signals to a discriminating volunteer.*

2 Do Recruitment By Inviting People To Respond To The Opportunity To Volunteer, Not By Telling Them They Ought To Be Concerned And Involved.

Hopefully, if the jobs you have designed are meaningful, you can enthusiastically approach your audience with a real offer of opportunity to serve, to grow and to make a difference.

3 Have A Year-Round Recruitment Plan.

Most agencies find early fall and January to be their most fruitful recruitment months for community adults. (Many people determine their yearly schedule of involvement after the children are in school or after the start of a new year.)

4 Utilize A Variety Of Recruitment Techniques.

Certain approaches will appeal to one person, another to others, so try variety and creativity.

Presentations And Speeches

- to service clubs, church groups, pre-retirement groups; high school and college classes, professional organizations, special interest clubs (use visual aids whenever possible).

Posters, Billboard, Bumper Stickers

place cards in cafeterias and restaurants; inserts in bills; messages on claim tickets; lapel buttons; show cards on buses and taxis; bookmarkers in bookstores and libraries; newsletters; blimps; telephone books; inserts in Welcome Wagon packets; messages on grocery sacks, milk cartons, match boxes, in church bulletins.

Displays

utilize slides, pictures, posters and possibly hand out novelty buttons (this is appropriate at fairs, shopping centers, business or company lobbies, schools, convention centers, Chamber of Commerce)

Newspapers

feature and news stories; aids; volunteer opportunity column; classifieds; picture coverage of volunteers at work.

Tours, Bazaars, Open Houses

parades, March for Volunteers, chain letters, announcements at football/basketball games, puppet shows, garage sales, volunteer telethon.

Literature Or Notices

to attract hard-to-reach volunteers in adult education classes, laundromats, grocery stores, bowling alleys, community/senior/youth centers, manpower and employment offices, recreation centers, nursing homes, libraries, student unions, military bases.

5 Be Sure To Utilize The Services Of Volunteer Clearing Houses In Your community (Such As The Voluntary Action Center And Retired Senior Volunteer Program.)

6 Set Up Good Interagency And Intra-Agency Sharing

Why reinvent the wheel? Many times people within your own unit may have the very resource or volunteer you need to help you meet a client's needs. Another agency in your community may have turned away a volunteer whose skills could not be used in their agency, but whose talents could be used by yours.

7 Opportunities To Volunteer Must Be Expanded To All Segments Of Community

It is consistent with the concept of equal opportunity. Instead of being the privilege of the already privileged, volunteering must become the right of everyone: minorities, youth, seniors, the handicapped, blue collar workers, business people, the disadvantaged. Remember — those who understand the culture and life styles of those you are trying to recruit make the best recruiters.

Why People Volunteer

to:	to:
belong	have a part in problem solving
give	test out career possibilities
complete educational requirements	receive an evaluated work experience
be recognized	be creative
receive professional training	make new friends
acquire new or use existing skills	develop personal leadership ability
break from boredom and monotony	be a part of a team
develop new interests	Have Fun!

. . . And Why They Don't

As you can see, there may be any reason or many reasons for becoming a volunteer. But why are so many people Not volunteers?

* fear of commitment (why get involved financially, politically, or with responsibility?)
* not enough time (families and job come first)
* bad volunteer experiences in the past (perhaps too big a job, not enough recognition for all the work done; never ending job)
* lack of understanding of, or interest in, organizational life
* not part of important personal or community values (for Black or Chicano a "volunteer" might be perceived as someone other than himself — White, female, middle class, middle age)
* too many organizations competing for a person's time

The most frequent mistake made in recruitment is to look in the wrong place for the right people. Below is a suggested guide for finding the best volunteer.

Worksheet: Recruitment Sources

Type Of Organization	Names Of Organizations	Why Would Membership Be Interested In Your Volunteer Social Work Job?	Possible Recruitment Method(s)
Religious			
Political			
Service/Civic			
Social & Fraternal			
Professional			

Worksheet: Recruitment Sources (continued)

Type Of Organization	Names Of Organizations	Why Would Membership Be Interested In Your Volunteer Social Work Job?	Possible Recruitment Method(s)
Military			
Educational Institutions			
Business & Public Agencies			
Other			

After Education Comes Creation

"Education is what you get from reading the small print. Experience is what you get from not reading it!"

Discussion

After reading through each of the data sources (including the small print!), you should now be ready to begin fashioning your own recruitment program. As a group, you will be asked to share what you have learned about each of the five categories:

(A) Criteria for Volunteers
(B) Main Points for Media Copy
(C) Recruitment Process
(D) Process for Handling Applications and
(E) Screening Process.

Compare the recruitment and screening activities of other programs against your own goals and philosophy. Now you should begin to develop your own recruitment and screening plans using the materials of other programs as guides.

Directions

Locate the page headed Category A — Criteria For Volunteers. Follow the directions on that page. When you are finished move on to Category B.

Category A — Criteria For Volunteers

Directions

1. Look back over your own program objectives and philosophy and "brainstorm" a list of ten adjectives that would describe a volunteer who could help you meet your objectives and fit into your philosophy.
2. Using this list of adjectives and input from your readings, develop a statement of criteria for volunteers in your program. Write it in the space provided on this page. You may choose a narrative format (like Alliance in "Who Makes a Good Parent Aide") or a list format.
3. Incorporate this criteria into a Volunteer Job Description. You may want to use Family Outreach job descriptions as a guide.

Category B — Main Points For Media Copy

Directions

1. "Brainstorm" a list of ten reasons why people might want to become a parent aide. (You may want to refer to the section "Why People Volunteer" in the OCI Recruitment Packet.)
2. List words and phrases which describe your program (Who? Why? What Outcomes?). This listing of 'buzz' words and key phrases can form the core for brochures, posters, radio spots, etc.
3. From these lists designate the main points for media copy.

Category C — Recruitment Process

Directions

1. The most frequent mistake made in recruitment is to look in the wrong place for the right people. To pinpoint your target audience, fill out the Worksheet: Recruitment sources in the OCI Recruitment Packet.
2. List steps you will take to recruit. (Cut and paste sections from data sources if you wish.) This listing should be comprehensive. Later you may use it to assign recruitment tasks to staff and volunteers.

Category D — Processing Applications

Directions

An efficient system for handling applicants is crucial to any program.

1. Brainstorm a list of "contact points" with applicants (i.e., application form sent out, interview scheduled).
2. Organize these contact points into a sequential list (i.e., Step 1 — Applicant calls to obtain information about program; Step 2 — Brochure sent out).
3. Develop a form to "track" your contacts with applicants. (You may refer to the Family Focus "Response to Volunteers in Action Recruitment Program," on the next page if desired.)

Response To Volunteers In Action Recruitment Program — 1977

Name	Date of Inquiry	Source	Personal Contact	Date Application Sent	Date Application Returned	Follow-up Phone Call	Date Set For Interview	Interview Completed	Date of DPW Notification Of Acceptance/ Rejection	Date Notified About Training	Training Completed	Date Entered Field

Category E — Screening Process

Directions

1. Brainstorm a list of ways to screen volunteers (include self-screening opportunites).
2. Look back at your criteria for volunteers in Category A. Asterisk (*) the highest priority criteria items (e.g., time to spend with clients, nonjudgmental, etc.). Decide what questions you can ask or what experiences you can create that will help you know whether an applicant meets each of the high priority criteria items.

Prevention Of Woes

"Good judgement comes from experience; experience comes from bad judgement."

Discussion

Now you have an outline of your recruitment and screening process. Is there any way to test it before you use it?

Experience, of course, will be your best teacher and you will undoubtedly revise your plan after you have used it once. However, two brief checks can be made on your plan.

Directions

1. Read back over the Possible Pitfalls in Activity 1. Have you avoided them?
2. Read the Advice page. You may use this advice to refine or modify your plan, if you desire. Remember, however, that your program may not have the same needs, resources, or philosophy of the program's whose comments you will read.

Advice! Advice! Advice!

★ ★

Recruit right after school starts to get a lot of pools. Move quickly – don't put the volunteer off. When someone phones in expressing interest:

- *send a packet of information*
- *respond to the application they send in*
- *schedule the interview*
- *schedule training*
- *give assignment*

Make sure you know exactly what you're going to do when the phone starts ringing with prospective volunteers.

Donna Garrett, Director, Family Focus, Belton, Texas.

★ ★

"As you can see, we do not train our volunteers extensively. Our feeling is that if we screen them correctly, we have found people who basically know what to do and our job is to help them do what they do naturally; that is, to be warm, compassionate and non-judgemental persons."

Donald P. Hart, Fairbanks Child Protection Task Force

★ ★

Screening:

This is perhaps the most crucial phase of the program. Interviewing teams should be composed of at least two people (man and woman, if possible). Each candidate should be seen by two teams, so that four people have a feeling about each candidate. Finally, the members of the teams all meet together to review their findings and select the Parent Aides for training. Personal notice needs to be given to both those selected and those rejected. Those rejected need special care, because many of them will be people who are looking for help themselves. They should be given alternative avenues of making contact with the overall program.

Fairbanks

★ ★

"RECRUITING MEN IS DIFFICULT. USE RETIREES. IF THE VOLUNTEERS AREN'T COMING IN, THEN THE PROGRAM ISN'T DOING WELL. VOLUNTEERS BRING THEIR FRIENDS IN."

SHARON PALLONE, DIRECTOR, SCAN OF ARKANSAS

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Module 5

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Office of Citizen Involvement, Region 06. This material used by Travis County Lay Therapy, has been excerpted from *The Citizen Involvement Handbook* developed by the Department of Human Resources, Office of Citizen Involvement, Region 06, Austin, Texas.